

Bureau of Indian Affairs, Interior

§ 211.53

operations are started on the leased premises, in accordance with applicable rules and regulations in 25 CFR part 216; 30 CFR chapter II, subchapters A and C; 30 CFR part 750 (Requirements for Surface Coal Mining and Reclamation Operations on Indian Lands), 43 CFR parts 3160, 3260, 3480, 3590, and Orders or Notices to Lessees (NTLs) issued thereunder.

§ 211.49 Restrictions on operations.

Leases issued under the provisions of the regulations in this part shall be subject to such restrictions as to time or times for well operations and production from any leased premises as the Secretary judges may be necessary or proper for the protection of the natural resources of the leased land and in the interest of the lessor.

§ 211.50 [Reserved]

§ 211.51 Surrender of leases.

A lessee may, with the approval of the Secretary, surrender a lease or any part of it, on the following conditions:

(a) All royalties and rentals due on the date the request for surrender is received must be paid;

(b) The superintendent, after consultation with the authorized officer, must be satisfied that proper provisions have been made for the conservation and protection of the property, and that all operations on the portion of the lease surrendered have been properly reclaimed, abandoned, or conditioned, as required;

(c) If a lease has been recorded, the lessee must submit a release along with the recording information of the original lease so that, after acceptance of the release, it may be recorded;

(d) If a lessee requests to surrender an entire lease or an entire undivided portion of a lease document, the lessee must deliver to the superintendent or area director the original lease documents; *Provided*, that where the request is made by an assignee to whom no copy of the lease was delivered, the assignee must deliver to the superintendent or area director only its copy of the assignment;

(e) If the lease (or a portion thereof being surrendered) is owned in undivided interests, all lessees owning undi-

vided interests in the lease must join in the request for surrender;

(f) No part of any advance rental shall be refunded to the lessee, nor shall any subsequent surrender or termination of a lease relieve the lessee of the obligation to pay advance rental if advance rental became due prior to the date the request for surrender was received by the superintendent or area director;

(g) If oil, gas, or geothermal resources are being drained from the leased premises by a well or wells located on lands not included in the lease, the Secretary reserves the right, prior to acceptance of the surrender, to impose reasonable and equitable terms and conditions to protect the interests of the Indian mineral owners of the lands surrendered. Such terms and conditions may include payment of compensatory royalty for any drainage; and

(h) Upon expiration or surrender of a solid mineral lease the lessee shall deliver the leased premises in a condition conforming to the approved reclamation plan. Unless otherwise provided in the lease, the machinery necessary to operate the mine is the property of the lessee. However, the machinery may not be removed from the leased premises without the written permission of the Secretary.

§ 211.52 Fees.

Unless otherwise authorized by the Secretary, each permit, lease, sublease, or other contract, or assignment, thereof shall be accompanied by a filing fee of \$75.00 at the time of filing.

§ 211.53 Assignments, overriding royalties, and operating agreements.

(a) Approved leases or any interest therein may be assigned or transferred only with the approval of the Secretary. The Indian mineral owner must also consent if approval of the Indian mineral owner is required in the lease. If consent is not required, then the Secretary shall notify the Indian mineral owner of the proposed assignment. To obtain the approval of the Secretary the assignee must be qualified to hold the lease under existing rules and regulations and shall furnish a satisfactory bond conditioned for the

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faithful performance of the covenants and conditions of the lease.

(b) No lease or interest therein or the use of such lease shall be assigned, sublet, or transferred, directly or indirectly, by working or drilling contract, or otherwise, without the consent of the Secretary.

(c) Assignments of leases, and stipulations modifying the provisions of existing leases, which stipulations are also subject to the approval of the Secretary, shall be filed with the superintendent within five (5) working days after the date of execution. Upon execution of satisfactory bonds by the assignee the Secretary may permit the release of any bonds executed by the assignor. Upon execution of satisfactory bonds the assignee accepts all the assignor's responsibilities and prior obligations and liabilities of the assignor (including but not limited to any underpaid royalties and rentals) under the lease.

(d) Agreements creating overriding royalties or payments out of production shall not be considered as interests in the leases as such provision is used in this section. Agreements creating overriding royalties or payments out of production, or agreements designating operators are hereby authorized and the approval of the Secretary shall not be required with respect thereto, but such agreements shall be subject to the condition that nothing in such agreements shall be construed as modifying any of the obligations of the lessee, including, but not limited to, obligations imposed by requirements of the MMS for reporting, accounting, and auditing; obligations for diligent development and operation, protection against drainage and mining in trespass, compliance with oil and gas, geothermal, and mining regulations (25 CFR part 216; 43 CFR parts 3160, 3260, 3480, and 3590; and those applicable rules found in 30 CFR chapter II, subchapters A and C) and the requirements for Secretarial approval before abandonment of any oil and gas or geothermal well or mining operation. All such obligations are to remain in full force and effect, the same as if free of any such overriding royalties or payments. The existence of agreements creating overriding royalties or payments out of production,

whether or not actually paid, shall not be considered as justification for the approval of abandonment of any oil and gas or geothermal well or mining operation. Nothing in this paragraph revokes the requirement for approval of assignments and other instruments which is required in this section, but any overriding royalties or payments out of production created by the provisions of such assignments or instruments shall be subject to the condition stated in this section. Agreements creating overriding royalties or payments out of production, or agreements designating operators shall be filed with the superintendent unless incorporated in assignments or instruments required to be filed pursuant to this section.

§211.54 Lease or permit cancellation; Bureau of Indian Affairs notice of noncompliance.

(a) If the Secretary determines that a permittee or lessee has failed to comply with the terms of the permit or lease; the regulations in this part; or other applicable laws or regulations; the Secretary may:

(1) Serve a notice of noncompliance specifying in what respect the permittee or lessee has failed to comply with the requirements referenced in this paragraph, and specifying what actions, if any, must be taken to correct the noncompliance; or

(2) Serve a notice of proposed cancellation of the lease or permit. The notice of proposed cancellation shall set forth the reasons why lease or permit cancellation is proposed and shall specify what actions, if any, must be taken to avoid cancellation.

(b) The notice of noncompliance or proposed cancellation shall specify in what respect the permittee or lessee has failed to comply with the requirements referenced in paragraph (a), and shall specify what actions, if any, must be taken to correct the noncompliance.

(c) The notice shall be served upon the permittee or lessee by delivery in person or by certified mail to the permittee or lessee at the permittee's or lessee's last known address. When certified mail is used, the date of service shall be deemed to be when the notice is received or five (5) working days